

Richard Morris Hunt Fellowship

Randall J. Biallas

The Richard Morris Hunt Fellowship gives access for a young French or American architect, pursuing a career in historic preservation, to an intensive work/study program that aims at providing a state-of-the-art immersion into the latest preservation techniques and practices of the other nation. The fellowship's goal is to encourage a meaningful exchange of ideas between architects interested in their respective countries' architectural heritage.

The fellowship is named after one of the United States' most distinguished 19th-century architects, Richard Morris Hunt (1827-95), who was the first American to study at L'Ecole des Beaux Arts. He was also one of the founders of the American Institute of Architects (AIA).⁺ It is sponsored by the Friends of Vieilles Maisons Francaises, Inc., a French organization whose mission is comparable to the US National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the AIA's American Architectural Foundation. The six-month fellowship offers a \$15,000 stipend for support of participation in scheduled programs and activities. Proficiency in conversational French and English is required. American fellows must be members or associate members in the AIA.

The 1993 holder of the fellowship is Jean-Christophe Simon. Monsieur Simon received a diploma from L'Ecole Speciale d'Architecture in Paris and has studied at the Center for History and Preservation of Ancient Monuments at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris. He served in the French Embassy in Washington, DC from 1981-1987 when he was in charge of the maintenance of French diplomatic buildings in the United States and was correspondent with the French architect in charge of construction of the new French chancery in Georgetown. From 1984 through 1987 he was a partner in a private architectural firm in Toulouse specializing in ancient monuments in southwest France. Since 1988 he has been Architecte des Batiments in Normandy and Provence in charge of maintenance and preservation of listed monuments.

The third holder of the fellowship is Bonita J. Mueller, AIA, of the NPS Denver Service Center, Eastern Team, Western Pennsylvania Partnership Branch. Ms. Mueller received a Master of Architecture degree for the University of Colorado, Denver in 1986, a Bachelor of Science degree in architectural studies from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana 1981, and has studied at the L'Ecole d'Architecture d'Urbanisme de Versailles. In addition to experience with the NPS she has also worked in private practice, is a member of Alliance Francaise de Denver, and has received a Fulbright research grant to study vernacular mountain architecture of Yugoslavia.

The second holder of the fellowship was Pierre-Antoine Gatier, Architecte-en-Chef des Monuments

Historiques. Monsieur Gatier received a diploma from the Center of Superior Studies in the History and Conservation of Historical Monuments in 1987, has studied at L'Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, and has a degree in art history from the Sorbonne, and a diploma from the School of the Louvre. He has experience working on historic structures from the 12th-19th centuries and is a member of the French Society of Archeology, ICOMOS, and the French Society of Architects. While in the United States in 1991 he visited the NPS Washington office, Williamsport Preservation Training Center, Western Regional office, Statue of Liberty National Monument, Ellis Island, Boston NHP, Lowell NHP, and Salem Maritime NHS.

The first holder of the fellowship was John Robbins, AIA, who is in private practice in Oxford, MS. Mr. Robbins received a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Virginia in 1975, and also studied at the University of Vermont, National Academy of Design, and at New York University. He formerly worked with the NPS at the North Atlantic Cultural Resource Center, Denver Service Center, Western Archeological and Conservation Center, and Historic American Buildings Survey. From 1983 through 1986 he was the NPS project architect for the restoration of the Statue of Liberty.

Those interested in applying for the fellowship should contact Mary Felber, Director of Scholarship Programs at the American Architectural Foundation, 1735 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20006; 202-626-7511.

Note

⁺ Paul Baker's scholarly entry for Hunt in the *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architecture* (New York: the Free Press, a division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1982) makes the following estimation regarding Hunt's place in American architectural history: he was "the most important figure in the development of architectural professionalism in the United States in the nineteenth century...[he was] a founder and president of the American Institute of architects, a respected spokesman for high professional standards, a tireless worker for public recognition of architects as professionals, a designer of many significant buildings...[who] became known as 'the dean of American architecture.'" At his death he was widely considered the most eminent architect in the United States."

Randall J. Biallas, AIA, is Chief Historical Architect of the National Park Service.